



No. 67 Rs. 5/-

THE LORD OF LANKA



RETOLD FROM THE RAMAYANA

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The *Ramayana* of Valmiki is considered to be the oldest epic of India. Unlike the *Mahabharata*, the story of Rama has no historical foundation. Yet the poem has become an intrinsic part of Hindu life. The victory of Rama, symbolic of the good forces, over Ravana, symbolic of the evil forces, is still celebrated all over India during the Dassera festival, held around October.

The story of Rama has inspired many to write poems and scholarly treatises. A number of versions of the story are prevalent, not only in Sanskrit, the language in which Valmiki wrote his *Ramayana* but also in Hindi, Bengali, Tamil and other Indian languages. During the course of time, what was basically a straightforward adventurous story underwent so much of transformation that Rama has been worshipped at least for a thousand years.

Sumali, a Rakshasa king, comes from the nether-world to the world of men in search of a groom for his daughter, Kaikesi. He is impressed by the mighty Kubera, son of Vishrava. He argues that if his daughter were to marry Vishrava, she would have sons as mighty as Kubera. Kaikesi marries Vishrava, but is fated to beget Rakshasa children, the eldest of whom is Ravana. Urged by his ambitious mother, Ravana puts forward his claim to be the Lord of Lanka. Thereafter follow a number of adventures, ultimately leading to the siege of Lanka by Rama.

The story, as narrated here, is based on the *Uttara Kanda* of Valmiki's *Ramayana*.

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THE LORD OF LANKA



SUMALI WAS THE KING OF THE RAKSHASAS.
FROM THE NETHER-WORLD, WHERE HE LIVED,
HE ONCE CAME TO VISIT THE WORLD OF MEN,
ALONG WITH HIS BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER, KAIKEYI.

YOU SHALL MARRY THE
WORTHIEST OF MEN
AND BEAR MANY MIGHTY
SONS.



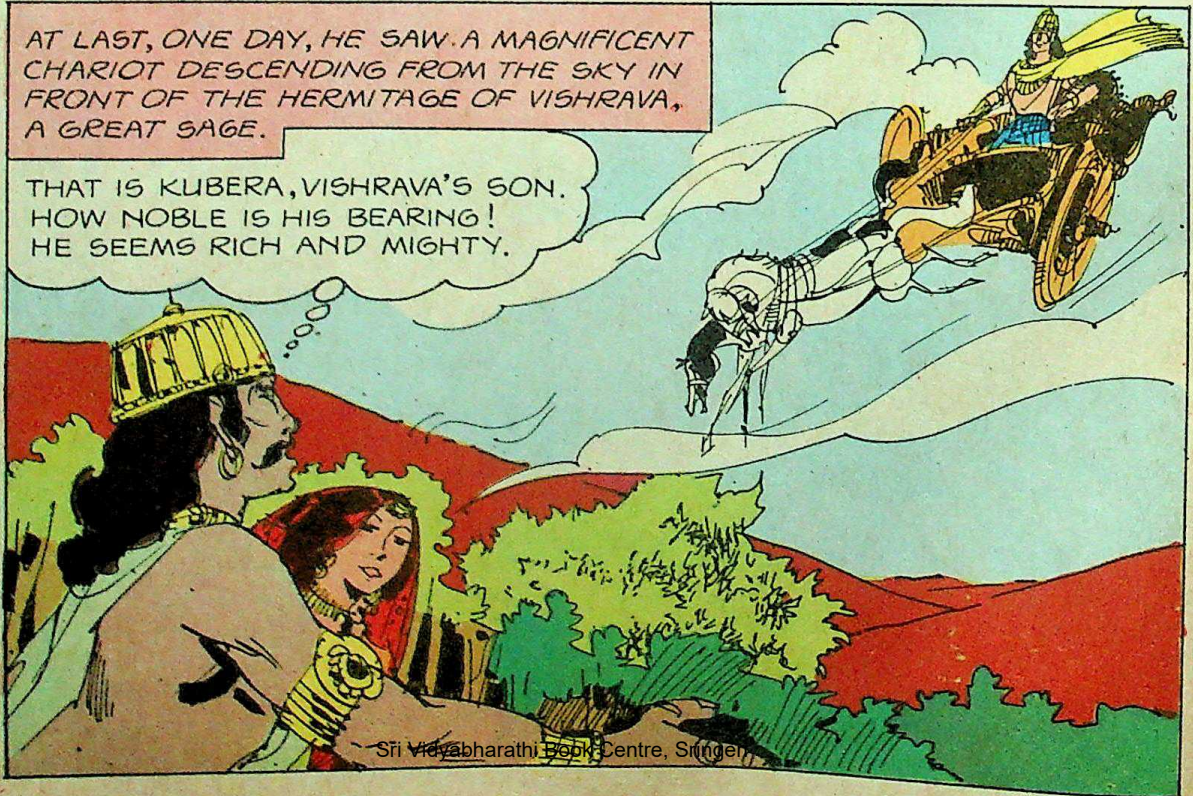
HE TRAVELLED FROM ONE PLACE
TO ANOTHER LOOKING FOR
THE MAN. BUT-

KAIKESI, NOT ONE
OF THEM IS
GOOD ENOUGH.



AT LAST, ONE DAY, HE SAW A MAGNIFICENT
CHARIOT DESCENDING FROM THE SKY IN
FRONT OF THE HERMITAGE OF VISHRAVA,
A GREAT SAGE.

THAT IS KUBERA, VISHRAVA'S SON.
HOW NOBLE IS HIS BEARING!
HE SEEMS RICH AND MIGHTY.

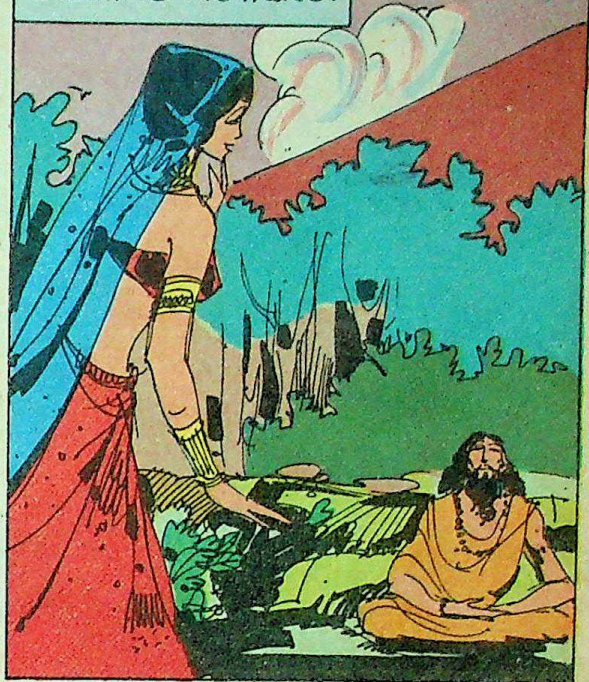


SUMALI RETURNED WITH HIS DAUGHTER TO THE NETHER-WORLD, BUT HE COULD NOT FORGET KUBERA.

DAUGHTER, APPROACH VISHRAVA. AND WIN HIM OVER. IF HE MARRIES YOU, YOU WILL HAVE SONS AS MIGHTY AS KUBERA.

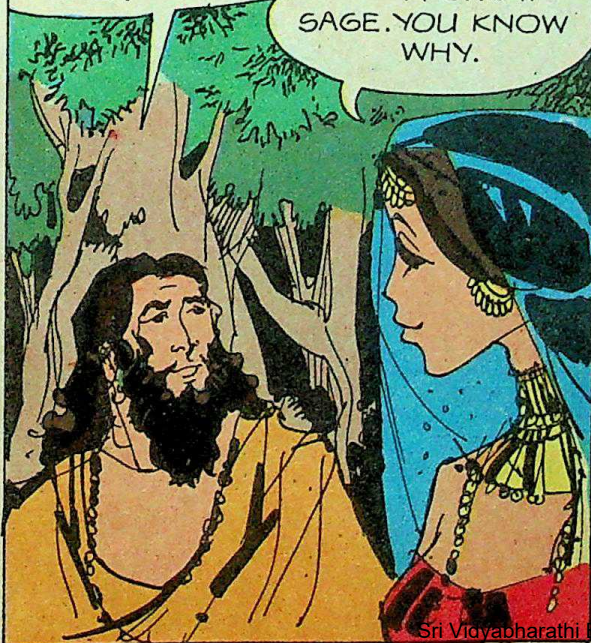


ACCORDINGLY KAIKESI WENT TO THE HERMITAGE OF VISHRAVA. HE WAS BUSY OFFERING HIS EVENING PRAYERS.

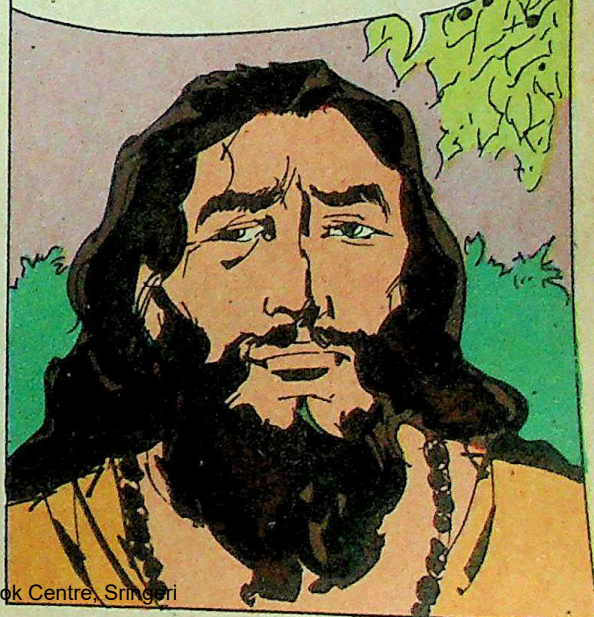


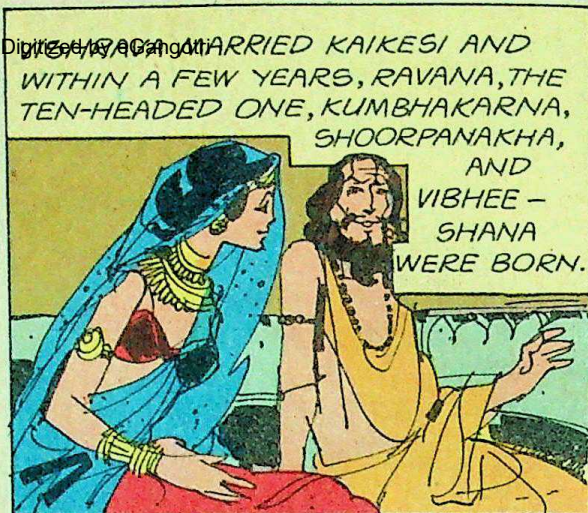
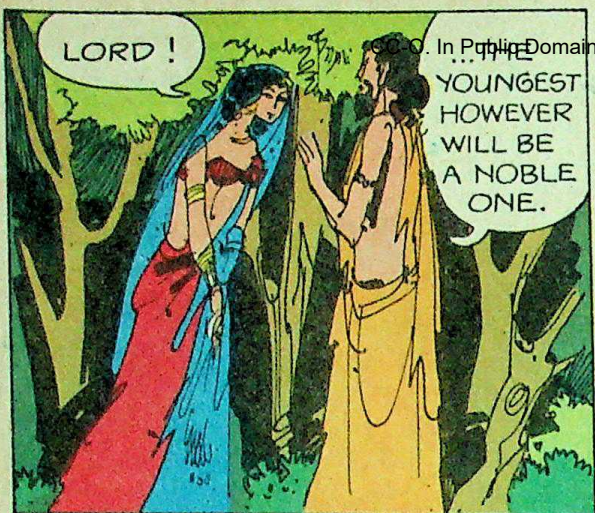
O BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN! WHO ARE YOU? WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE?

MY NAME IS KAIKESI. YOU ARE A GREAT SAGE. YOU KNOW WHY.

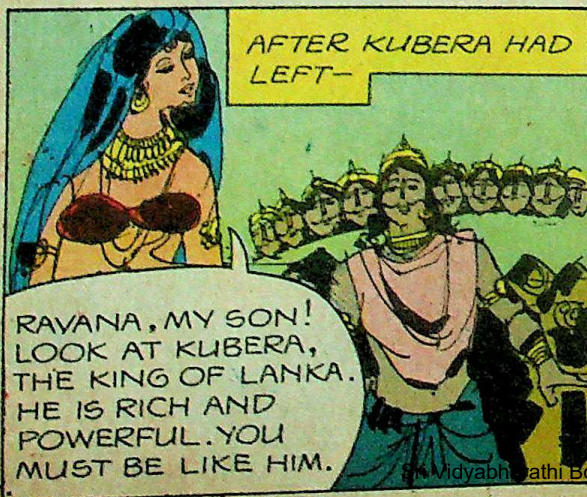


I UNDERSTAND. BUT YOU HAVE COME TO ME AT THE WRONG HOUR. THE CHILDREN BORN TO US WILL BE WICKED RAKSHASAS...

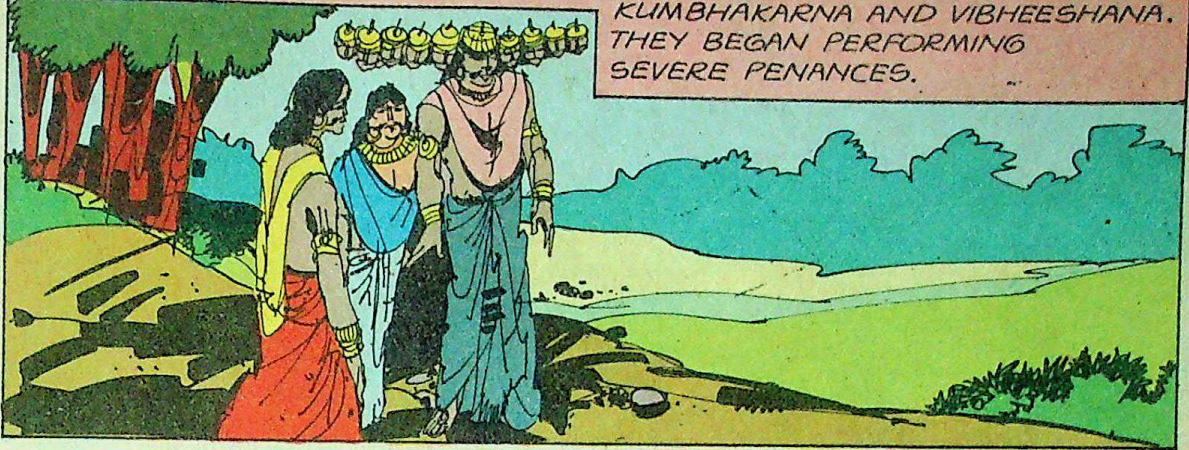




YEARS ROLLED BY. RAVANA AND KUMBHAKARNA GREW UP TO BE ARROGANT AND AMBITIOUS. ONE DAY, KUBERA CAME TO VISIT HIS FATHER.



RAVANA IMMEDIATELY SET OUT FOR GOKARNA ALONG WITH HIS BROTHERS, KUMBHAKARNA AND VIBHEESHANA. THEY BEGAN PERFORMING SEVERE PENANCES.



DURING THE PENANCE, RAVANA DID NOT TOUCH FOOD. ONE BY ONE HE SACRIFICED HIS HEADS IN THE HOLY FIRE.

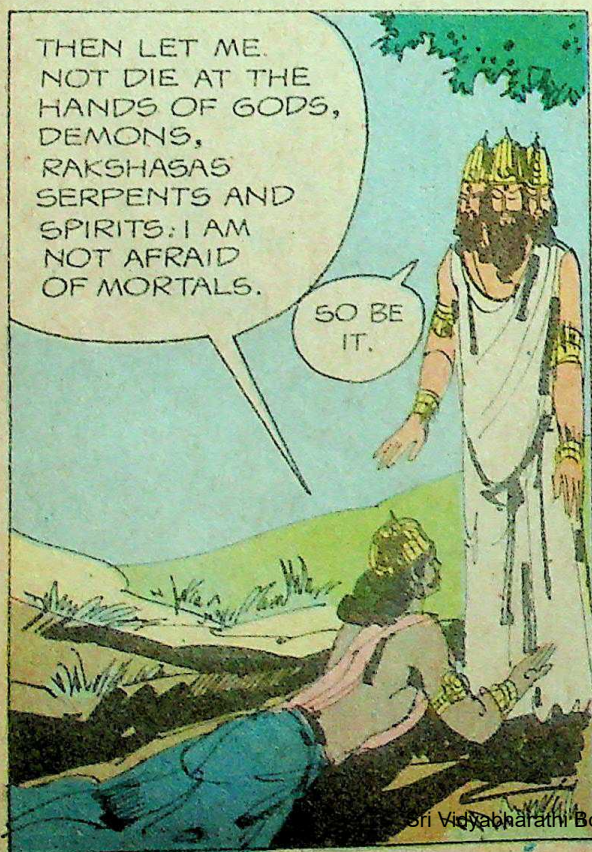
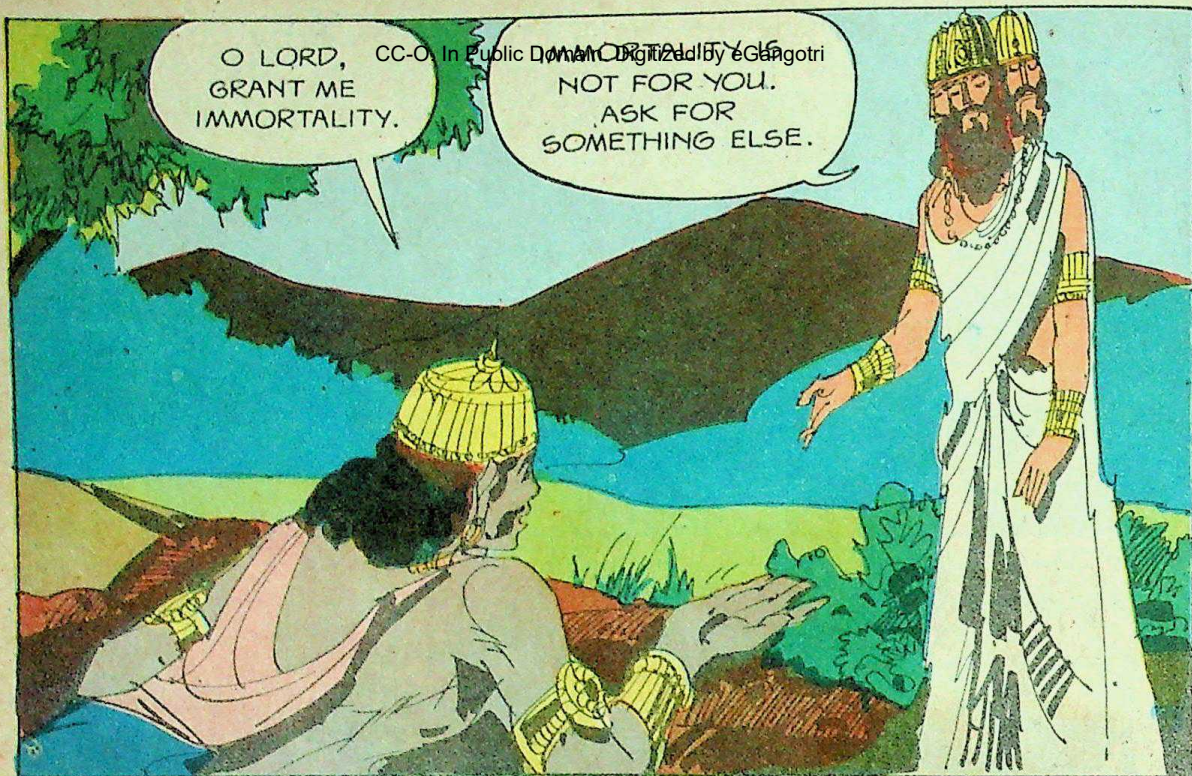


WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO SACRIFICE HIS TENTH HEAD, LORD BRAHMA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.



I AM PLEASED WITH YOU. ASK FOR A BOON.



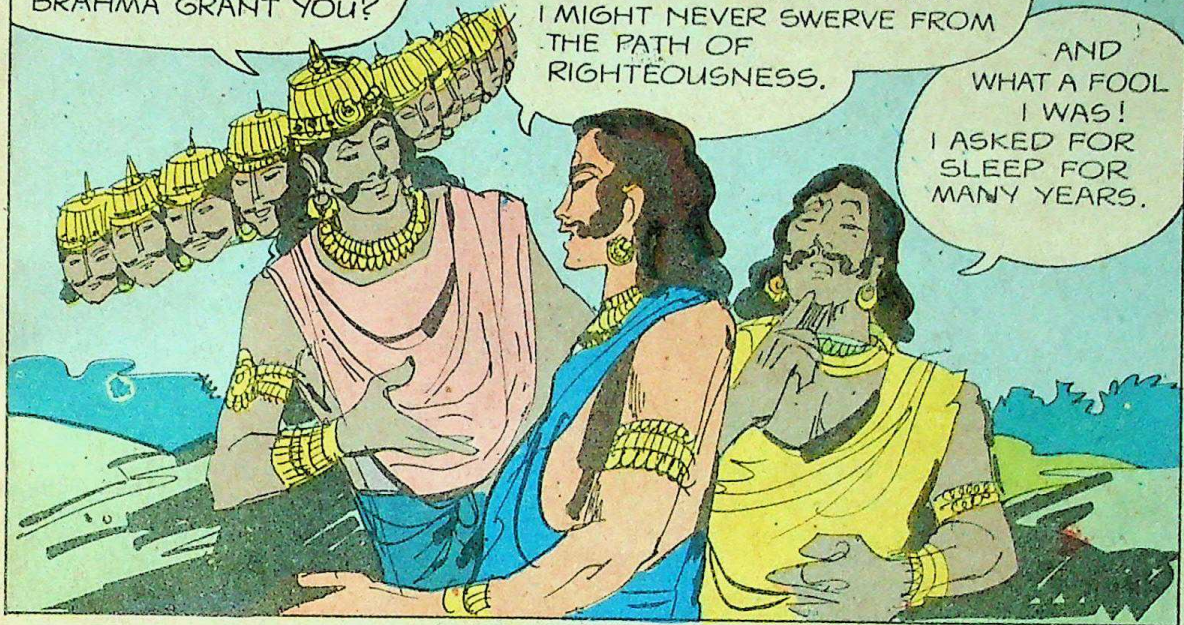


BRAHMA ALSO GRANTED BOONS TO VIBHEESHANA AND KUMBHAKARNA.

VIBHEESHANA, WHAT BOON DID LORD BRAHMA GRANT YOU?

IMMORTALITY. I HAD ONLY EXPRESSED THE WISH THAT I MIGHT NEVER SWERVE FROM THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

AND WHAT A FOOL I WAS! I ASKED FOR SLEEP FOR MANY YEARS.



WHEN THEY RETURNED HOME, SUMALI CAME TO MEET THEM.

RAVANA, I AM PROUD OF YOU. NOW WIN BACK LANKA. IT BELONGS RIGHTFULLY TO OUR PEOPLE.



PROMPTED BY THE WORDS OF SUMALI AND HIS MEN, RAVANA SET OUT FOR LANKA.

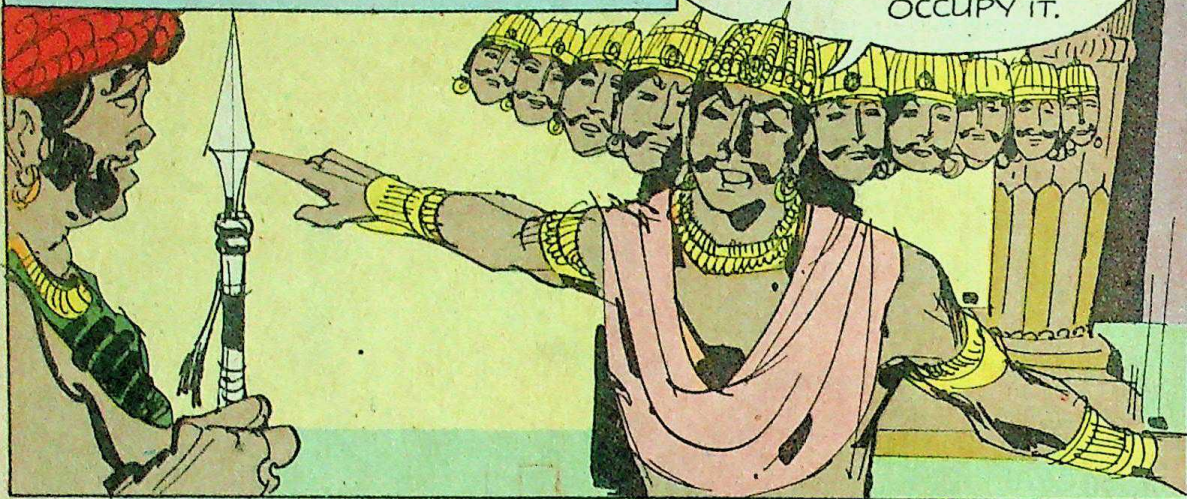
QUIET, BROTHER! IT IS NOT PROPER.

VIBHEESHANA, WHO ASKED FOR YOUR ADVICE?



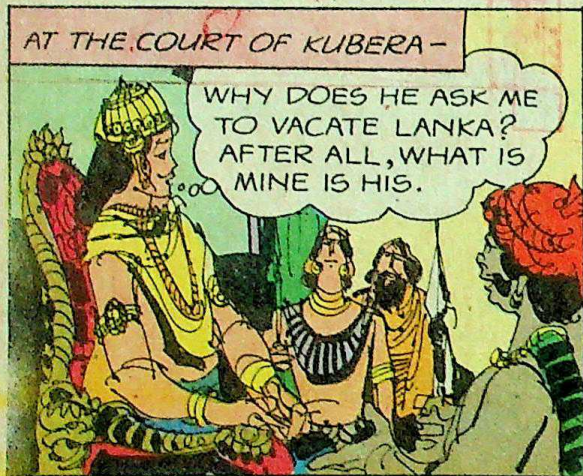
FROM HIS CAMP IN THE JUNGLE TRIKOOTA MOUNTAINS, RAVANA SENT A MESSENGER TO THE COURT OF KUBERA.

AND TELL KUBERA THAT HE MUST VACATE LANKA, IMMEDIATELY. I WISH TO OCCUPY IT.



AT THE COURT OF KUBERA -

WHY DOES HE ASK ME TO VACATE LANKA? AFTER ALL, WHAT IS MINE IS HIS.



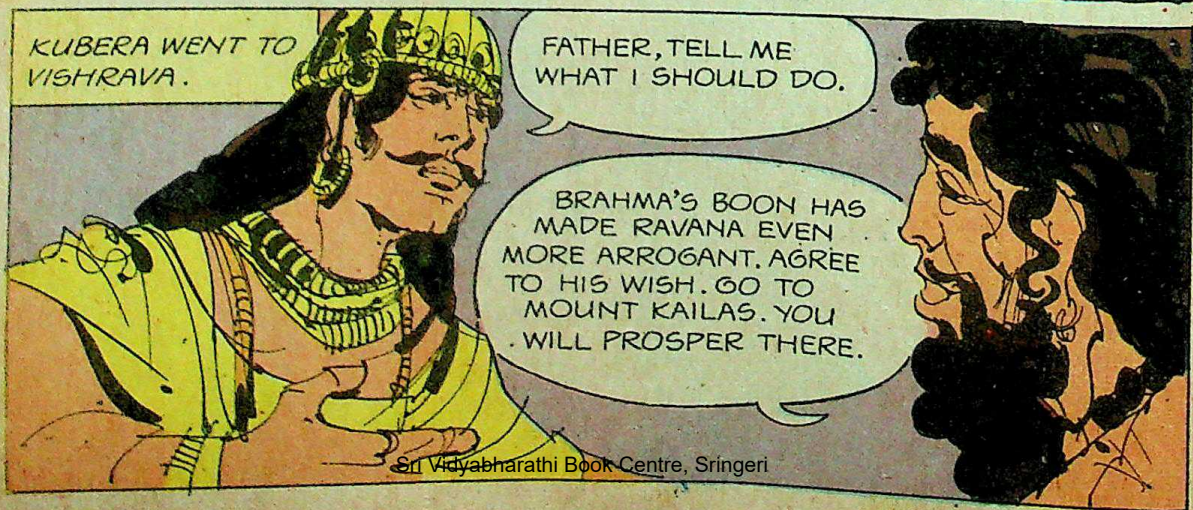
TELL RAVANA, I WILL CONSULT MY FATHER AND ACT.



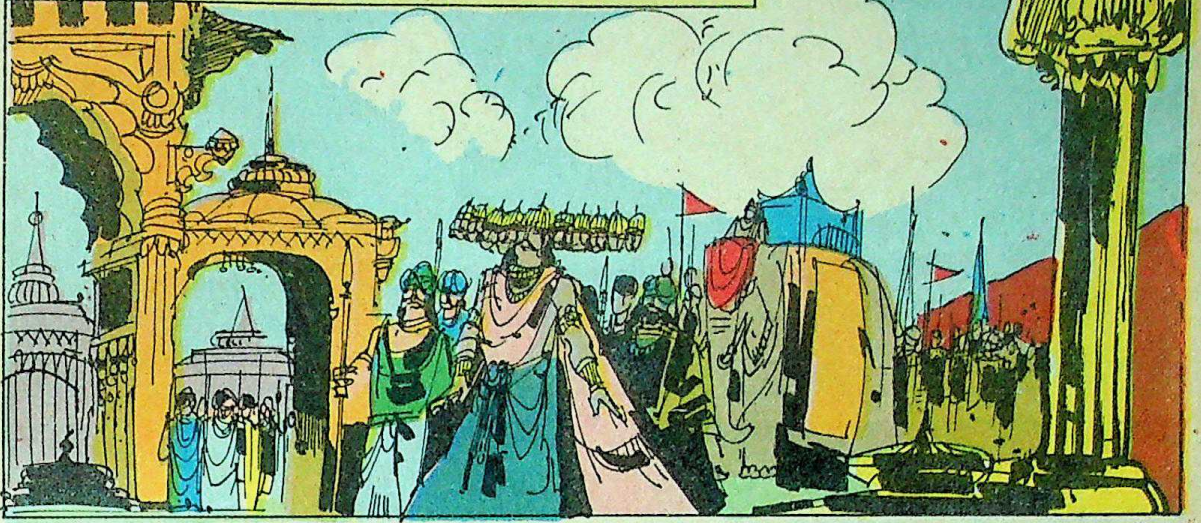
KUBERA WENT TO VISHRAVA.

FATHER, TELL ME WHAT I SHOULD DO.

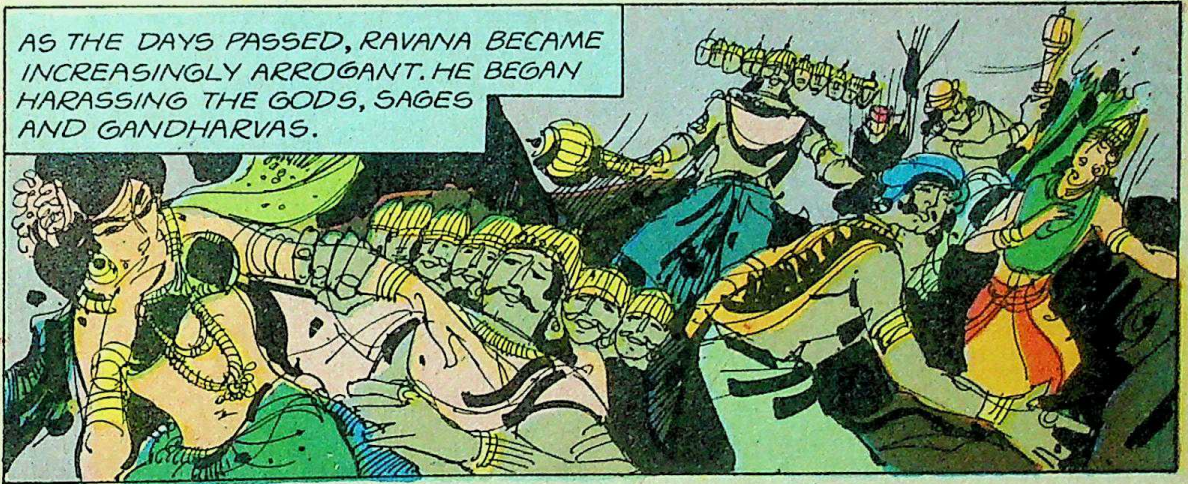
BRAHMA'S BOON HAS MADE RAVANA EVEN MORE ARROGANT. AGREE TO HIS WISH. GO TO MOUNT KAILAS. YOU WILL PROSPER THERE.



KUBERA VACATED LANKA. RAVANA CAME THERE WITH HIS ARMY AND BECAME THE KING.

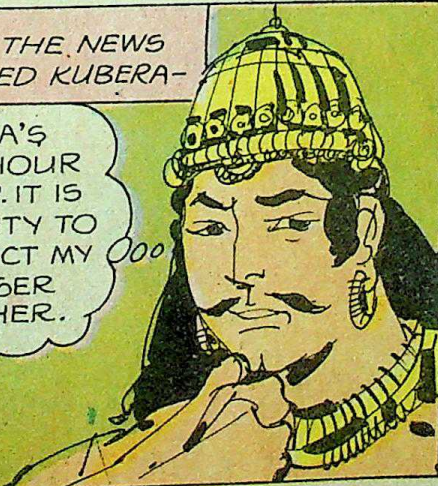


AS THE DAYS PASSED, RAVANA BECAME INCREASINGLY ARROGANT. HE BEGAN HARASSING THE GODS, SAGES AND GANDHARVAS.

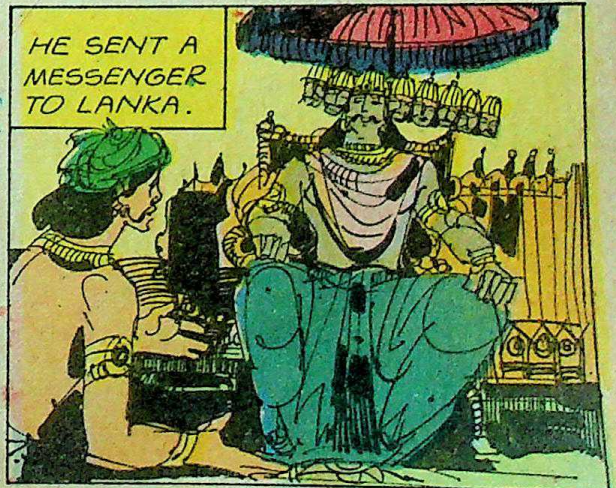


WHEN THE NEWS REACHED KUBERA-

RAVANA'S BEHAVIOUR IS BAD. IT IS MY DUTY TO CORRECT MY YOUNGER BROTHER.

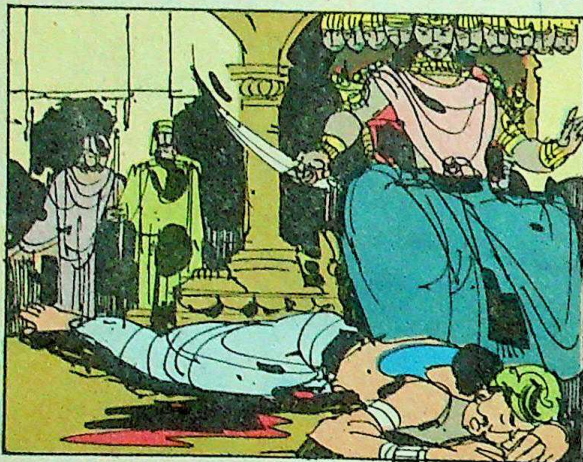


HE SENT A MESSENGER TO LANKA.

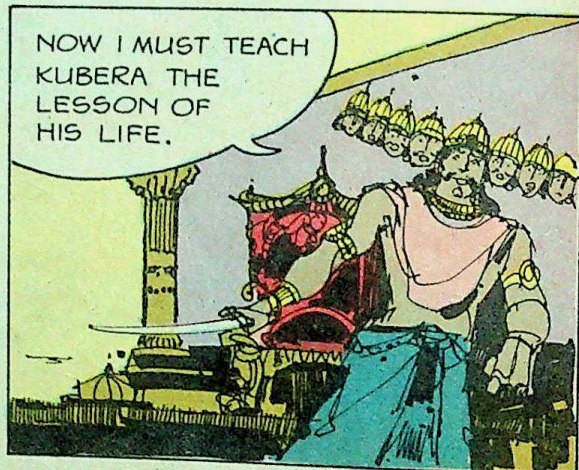


MY MASTER, KUBERA SAYS, IT DOES NOT BEFIT THE RACE OF VISHRAVA TO HARASS SAGES AND KILL INNOCENT PEOPLE. YOU MUST MEND YOUR WAYS.

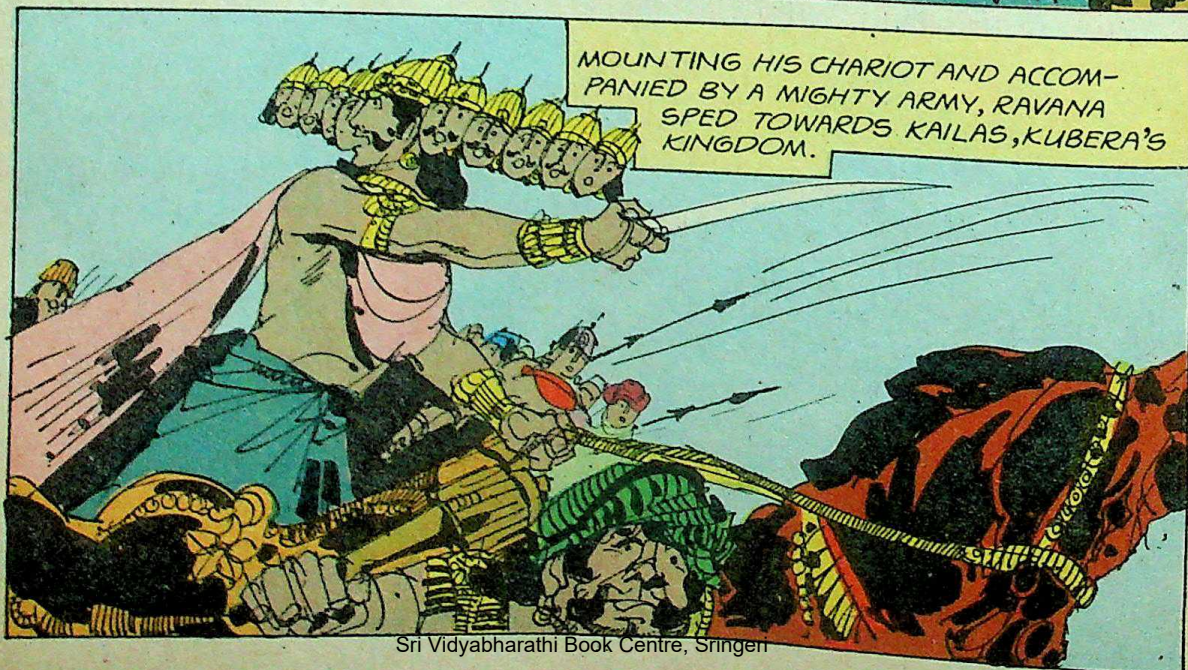
IMPUDENT MAN! YOU WILL PAY FOR THIS.



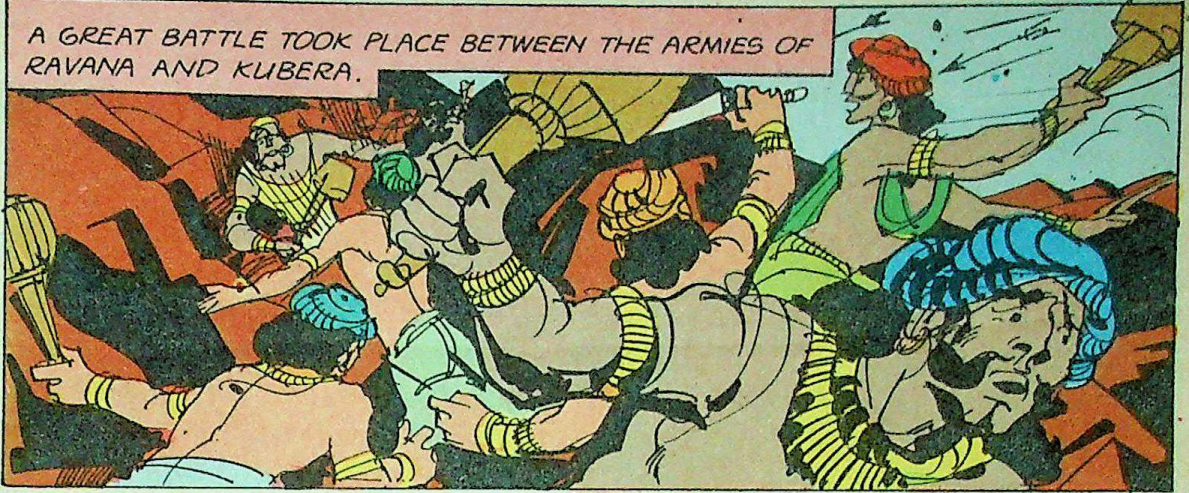
NOW I MUST TEACH KUBERA THE LESSON OF HIS LIFE.



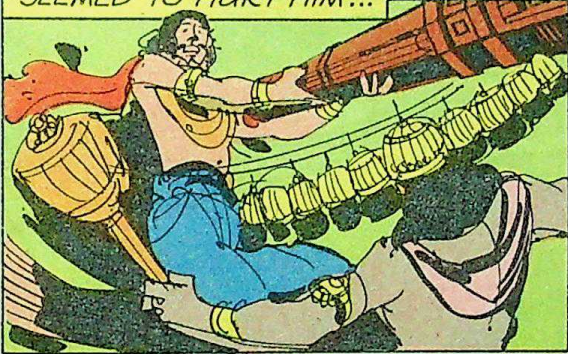
MOUNTING HIS CHARIOT AND ACCOMPANIED BY A MIGHTY ARMY, RAVANA SPED TOWARDS KAILAS, KUBERA'S KINGDOM.



A GREAT BATTLE TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE ARMIES OF RAVANA AND KUBERA.



BECAUSE OF THE BOON, RAVANA HAD RECEIVED FROM BRAHMA, NOTHING SEEMED TO HURT HIM...



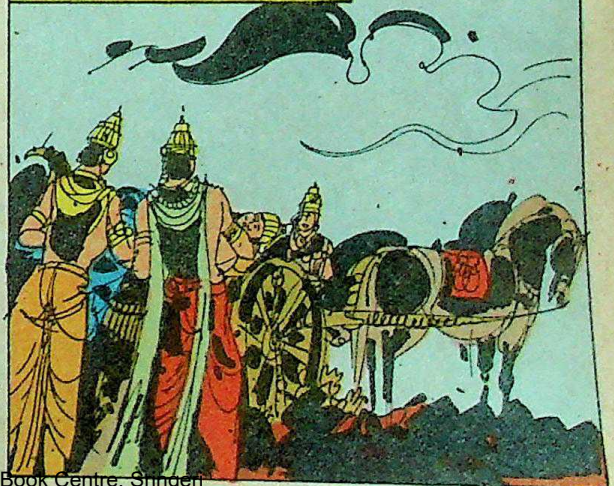
...NOT EVEN THE MIGHTY MACE OF KUBERA.



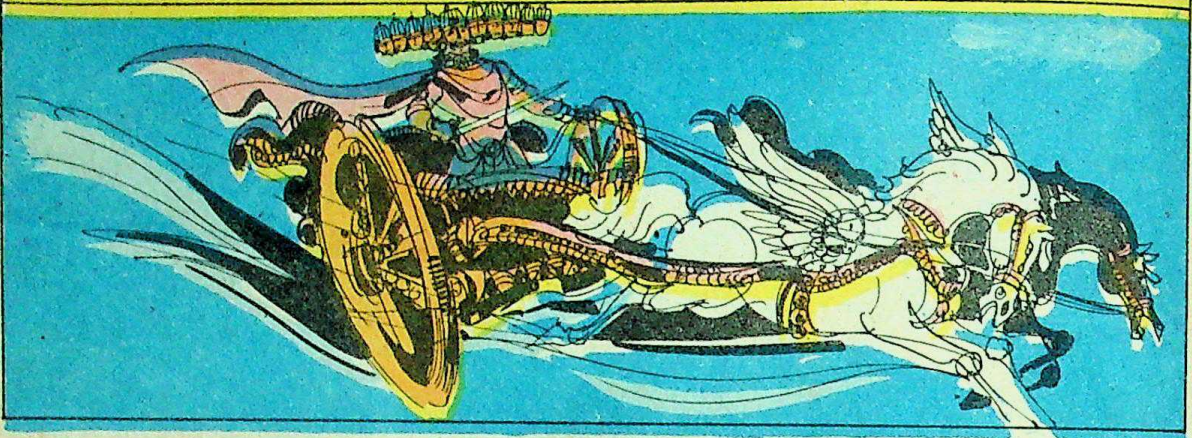
AT LAST KUBERA FELL ...



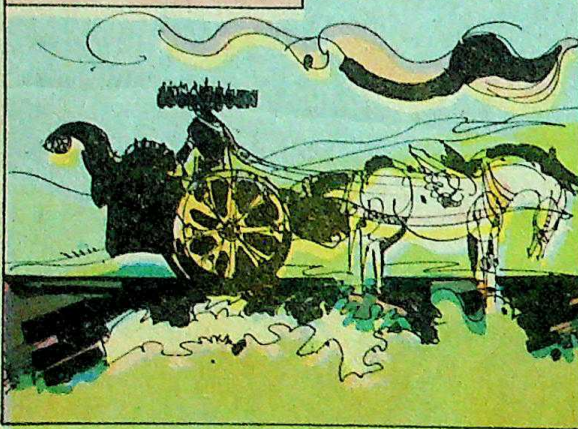
...BUT THE GODS WHO WERE WITNESSING THE BATTLE FROM ABOVE, TOOK HIM TO SAFETY IN A HEAVENLY CHARIOT.



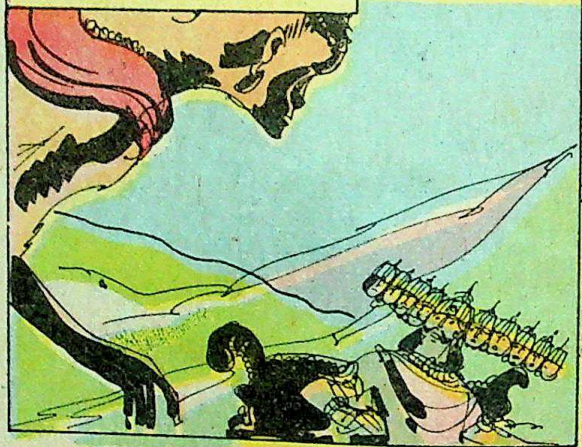
THERE WAS NONE TO OBSTRUCT RAVANA NOW. HE SEIZED 'PUSHPAK', THE
CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitized by eGangotri
FLYING CHARIOT OF KUBERA, AND BEGAN EXPLORING MOUNT KAILAS.



SOON, HOWEVER, 'PUSHPAK' CAME
TO A DEAD HALT.



WHEN RAVANA SAT BROODING
ABOUT THE CAUSE...



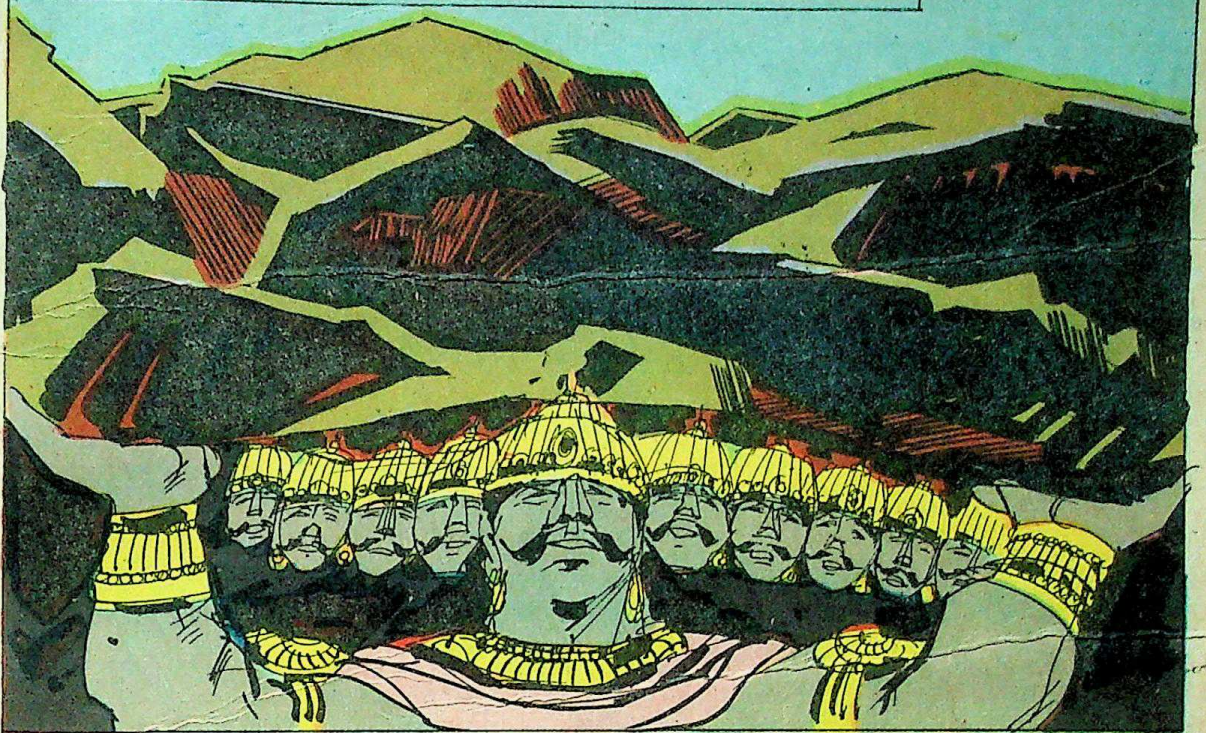
...NANDI, SHIVA'S ATTENDANT, CAME DOWN.

RAVANA! THIS IS LORD
SHIVA'S ABODE.
DO NOT DISTURB
HIM.

WHOSE ORDERS ARE
THESE? SHIVA'S? I'LL
UPROOT THIS VERY
MOUNTAIN ON WHICH
HE RESTS.

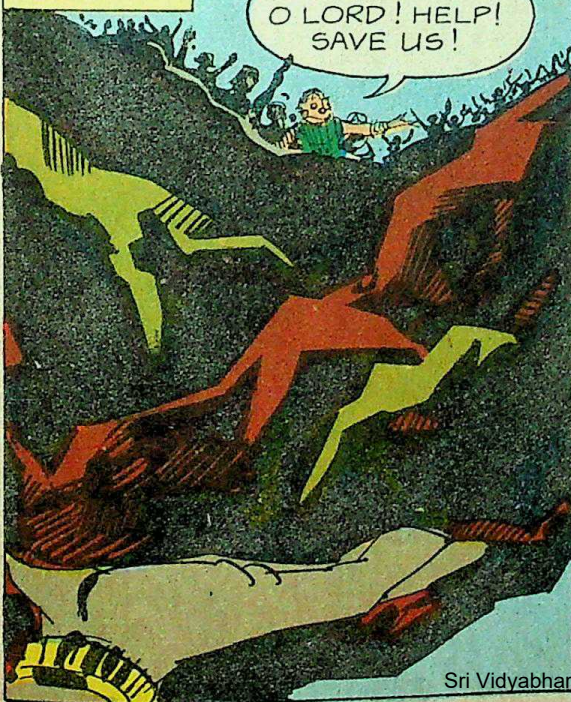


ASSUMING A HUGE FORM RAVANA TRIED TO LIFT KAILAS.



AS THE MOUNTAIN SHOOK, THE FOLLOWERS OF SHIVA WERE TERRIFIED.

O LORD! HELP!
SAVE US!



EVEN PARVATI, LORD SHIVA'S CONSORT, WAS SCARED.

LORD!

DO NOT
FEAR.
I'M HERE.

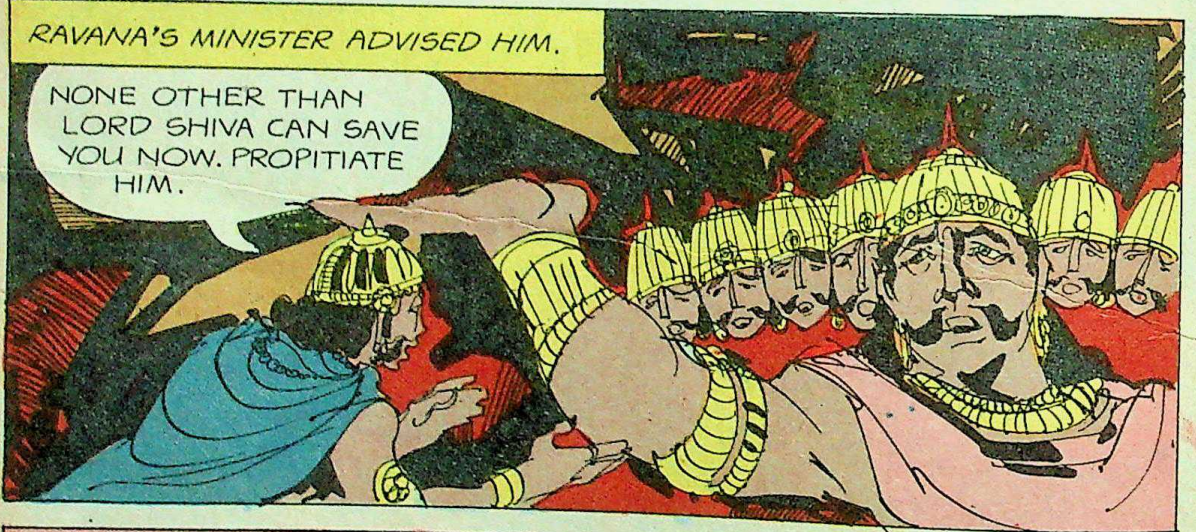


LORD SHIVA PRESSED THE MOUNTAIN WITH HIS TOE AND RAVANA'S HANDS WERE CRUSHED BELOW IT.



RAVANA'S MINISTER ADVISED HIM.

NONE OTHER THAN LORD SHIVA CAN SAVE YOU NOW. PROPITIATE HIM.



RAVANA BEGAN SINGING HYMNS IN PRAISE OF SHIVA.

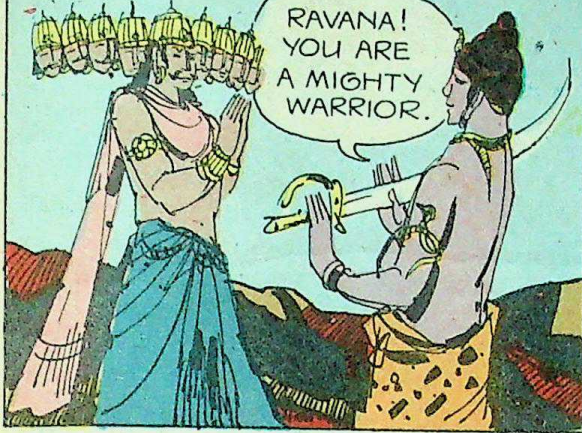


PLEASED WITH HIM, LORD SHIVA PERMITTED RAVANA TO REMOVE HIS HANDS FROM UNDER THE MOUNTAIN...

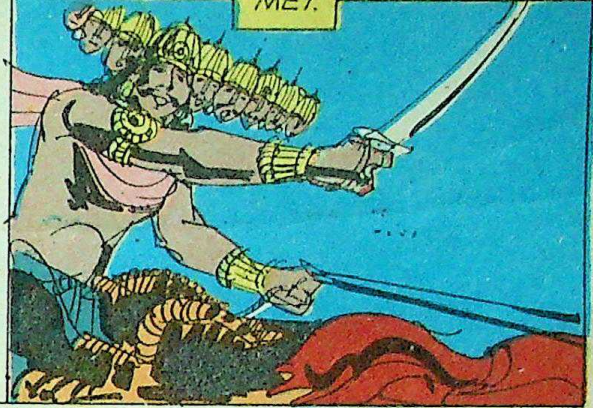


...AND GAVE HIM A SWORD.

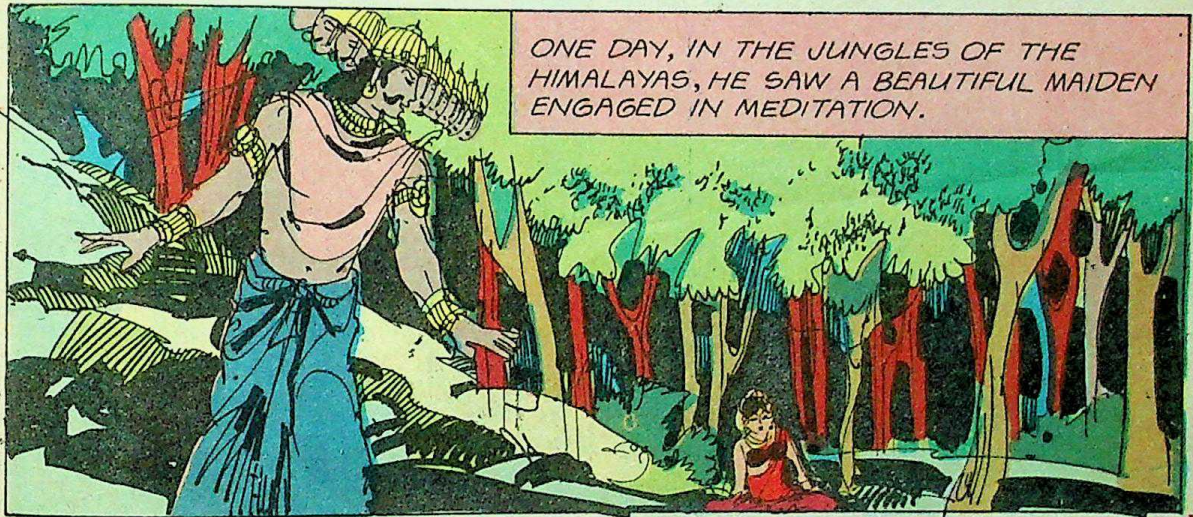
RAVANA!
YOU ARE
A MIGHTY
WARRIOR.



RAVANA NOW ROAMED ABOUT THE
WORLD, CONQUERING ALL WHOM HE
MET.



ONE DAY, IN THE JUNGLES OF THE
HIMALAYAS, HE SAW A BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN
ENGAGED IN MEDITATION.



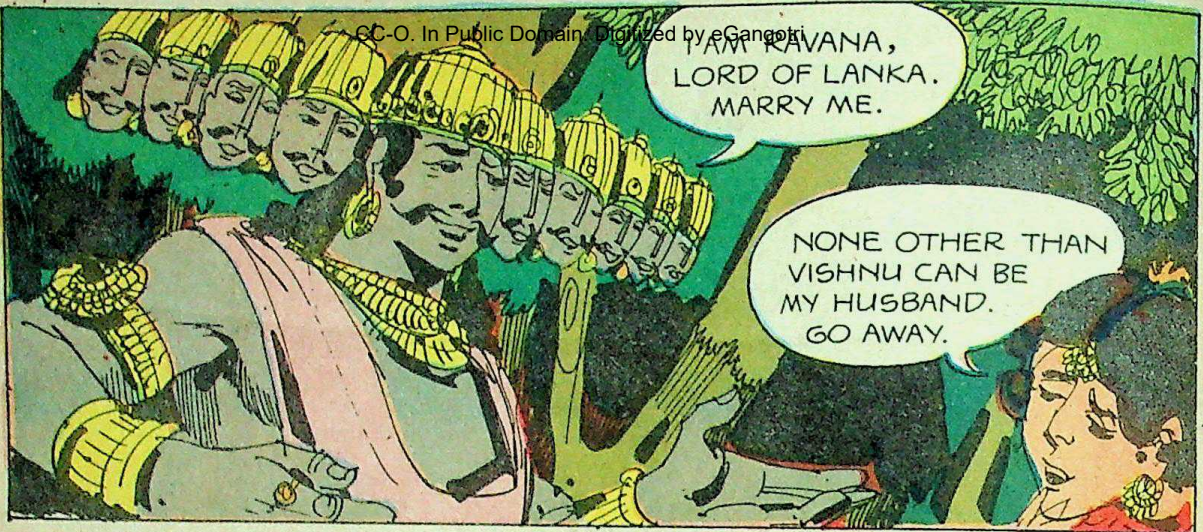
RAVANA ADVANCED TOWARDS HER.

O BEAUTIFUL
MAIDEN, WHO ARE
YOU? WHY DO YOU
PERFORM SUCH
AUSTERITIES?

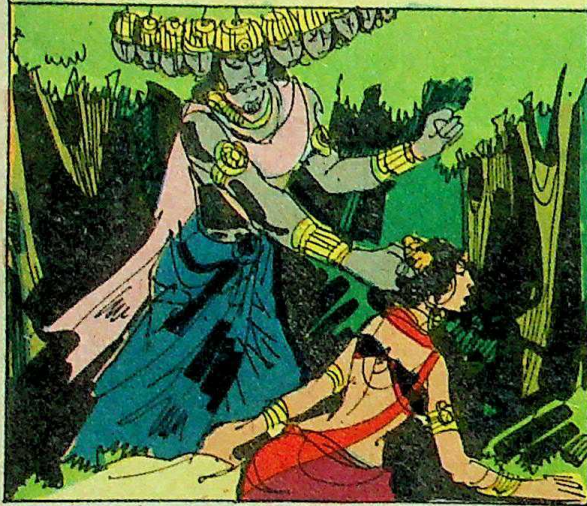


I AM VEDAVATI.
I AM PERFORM-
ING THESE
AUSTERITIES
TO WIN LORD
VISHNU AS
MY HUSBAND.





RAVANA SEIZED HER BY HER HAIR.



ENRAGED, VEDAVATI CREATED A FIRE...



...AND JUMPED INTO IT.



VEDAVATI TOOK BIRTH IN A LOTUS.



WHAT A BEAUTIFUL
BABY! WHO COULD
SHE BE?



RAVANA TOOK HER TO HIS CAMP,
BUT—



SHE WILL BE
THE CAUSE
OF YOUR
DEATH..

WHAT
SHALL I
DO WITH
HER?

DISCARD
HER.

RAVANA IMMEDIATELY THREW HER
INTO THE RIVER.



MANY DAYS LATER, IN KING VISHVAMITRA'S HALL OF FIRE-SACRIFICE, AT MITHILA-



SUDDENLY THERE APPEARED, IN THE CENTRE OF THE HALL, A BEAUTIFUL CHILD.

MY PRAYERS HAVE AT LAST BEEN ANSWERED. I'LL ADOPT HER AS MY CHILD.

IT WAS NONE OTHER THAN VEDAVATI.

SINCE I HAVE OBTAINED HER FROM A FURROW* I'LL NAME HER SITA.

SITA SOON GREW TO BE A BEAUTIFUL GIRL LOVED BY ONE AND ALL.



* HALL OF FIRE-SACRIFICE. ** SITA.

JANAKA ARRANGED A SWAYAMWARA TO WHICH HE INVITED PRINCES FROM FAR AND NEAR.

HE WHO SUCCEEDS
IN STRINGING
THIS BOW WILL
WIN SITA'S HAND.



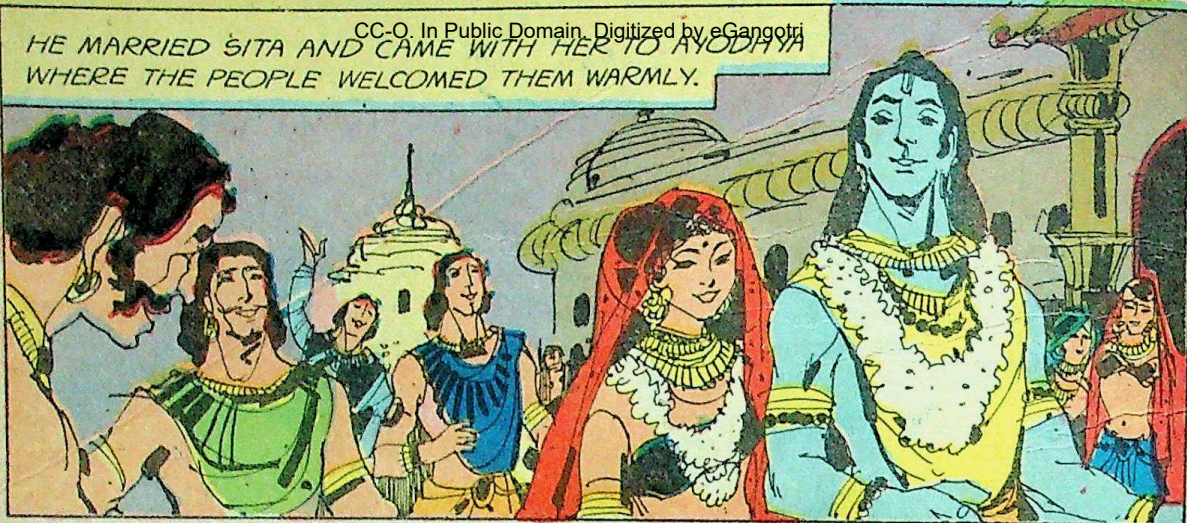
AMONG THE PRINCES WAS RAMA OF
AYODHYA, WHO HAD COME THERE
WITH SAGE VISHWAMITRA.



RAMA LIFTED THE BOW
EASILY. IT BROKE UNDER HIS
STRENGTH.

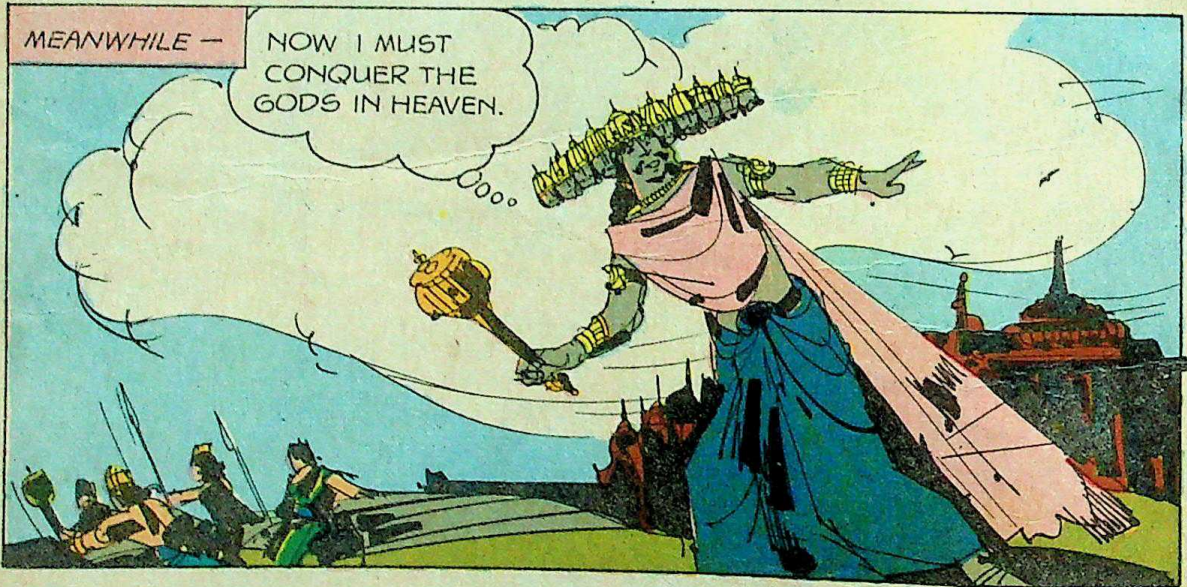


HE MARRIED SITA AND CAME WITH HER TO AYODHYA
WHERE THE PEOPLE WELCOMED THEM WARMLY.



MEANWHILE —

NOW I MUST
CONQUER THE
GODS IN HEAVEN.



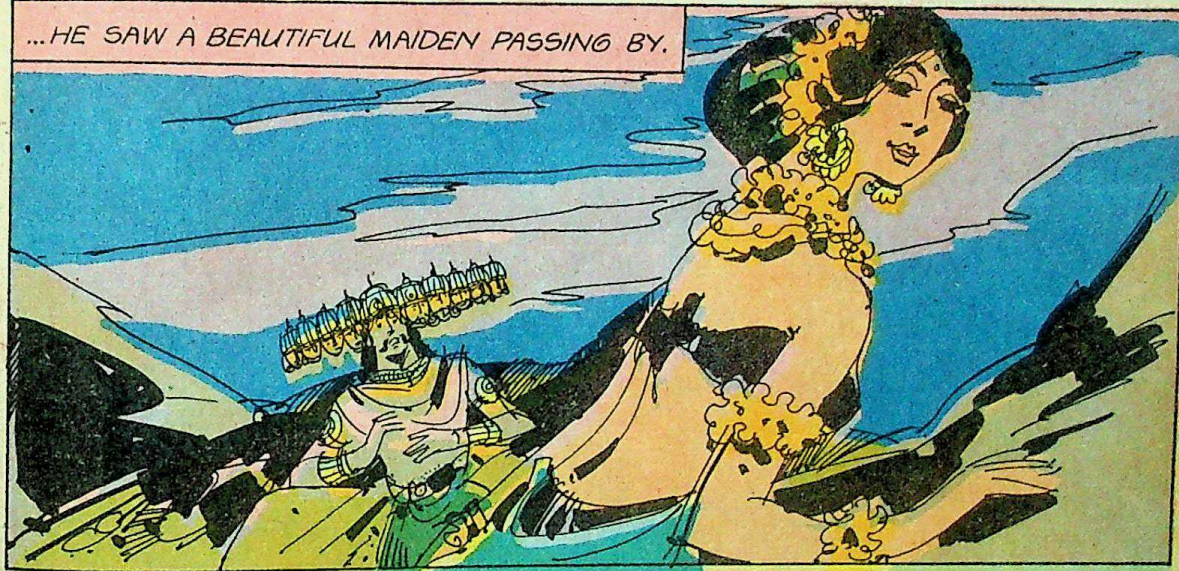
SAVE US!



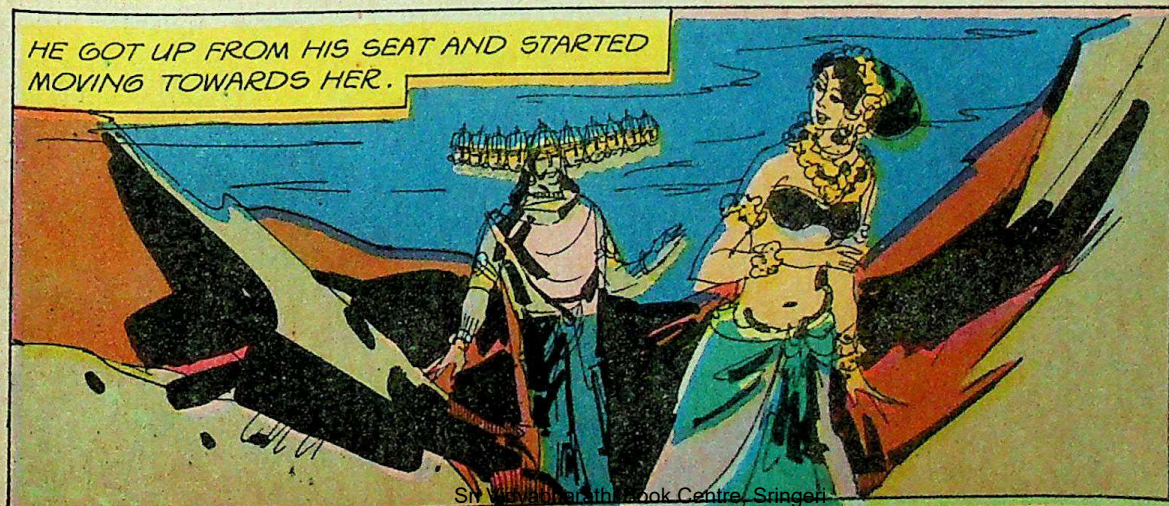
ONE NIGHT, WHEN RAVANA AND HIS MEN WERE RESTING ON MOUNT KAILAS, NEAR KUBERA'S CAPITAL ...

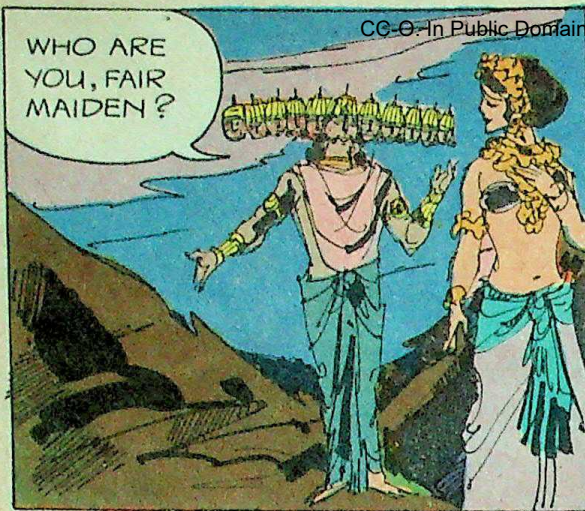


...HE SAW A BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN PASSING BY.



HE GOT UP FROM HIS SEAT AND STARTED MOVING TOWARDS HER.

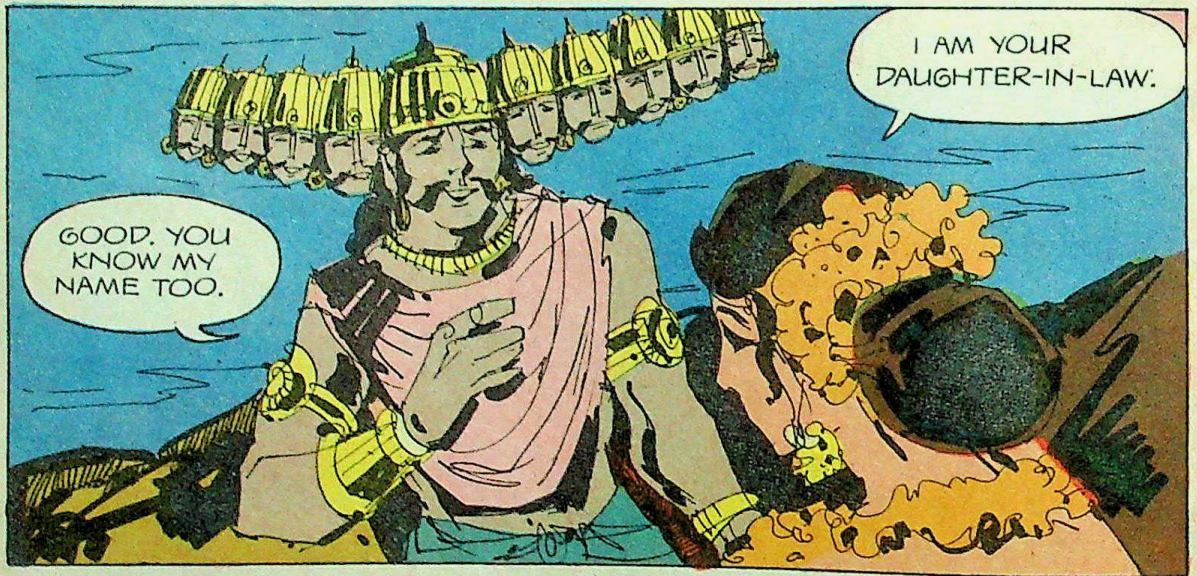




WHO ARE
YOU, FAIR
MAIDEN?

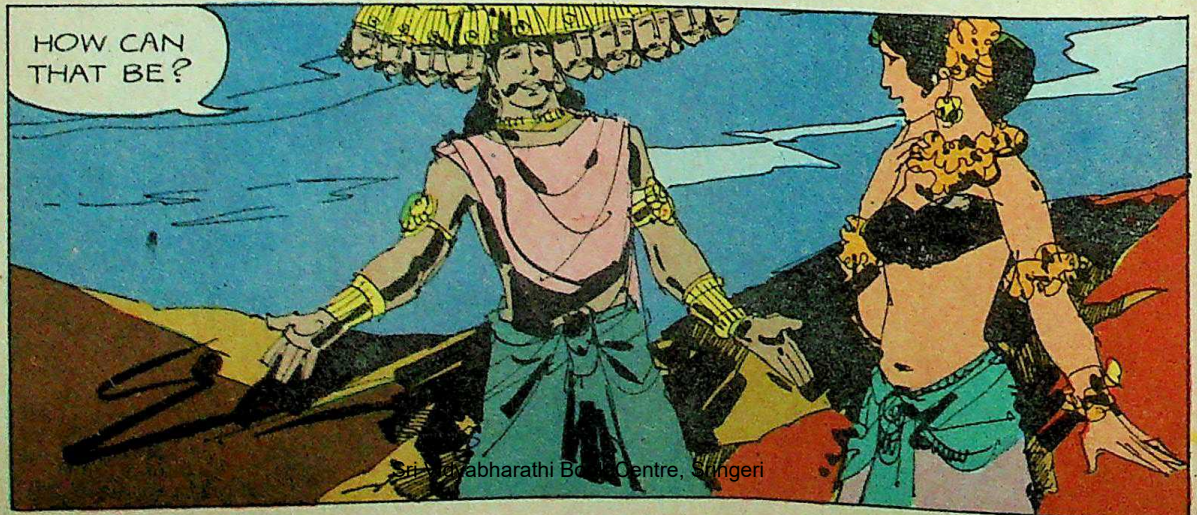


LORD RAVANA!
I AM RAMBHA.



GOOD. YOU
KNOW MY
NAME TOO.

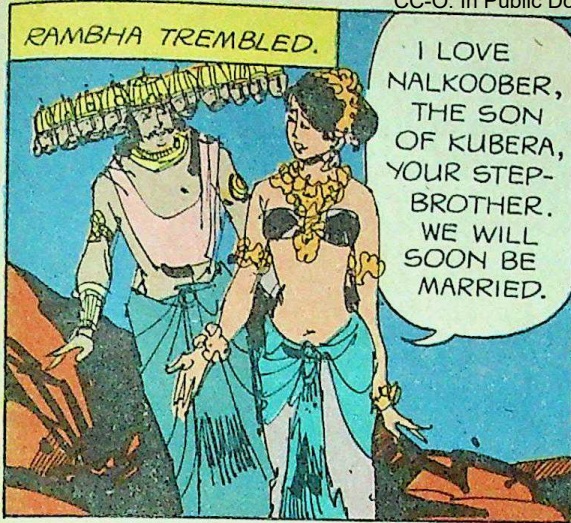
I AM YOUR
DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.



HOW CAN
THAT BE?

RAMBHA TREMBLED.

I LOVE NALKOOBER, THE SON OF KUBERA, YOUR STEP-BROTHER. WE WILL SOON BE MARRIED.



RAVANA SEIZED HER BY HER ARM.

YOU SHALL MARRY ME.



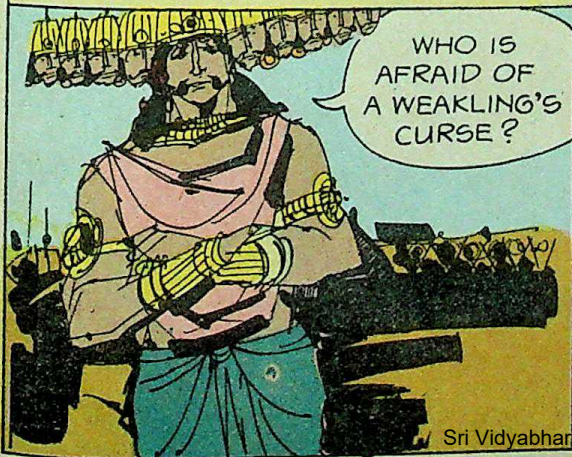
BUT RAMBHA ESCAPED FROM HIS CLUTCHES. SHE WENT TO NALKOOBER AND NARRATED ALL.

RAVANA DARED TO THINK OF MARRYING YOU. IF HE EVER MARRIES A WOMAN AGAINST HER WILL, HIS HEADS WILL BREAK INTO SEVEN PIECES.



WHEN RAVANA HEARD THIS -

WHO IS AFRAID OF A WEAKLING'S CURSE?

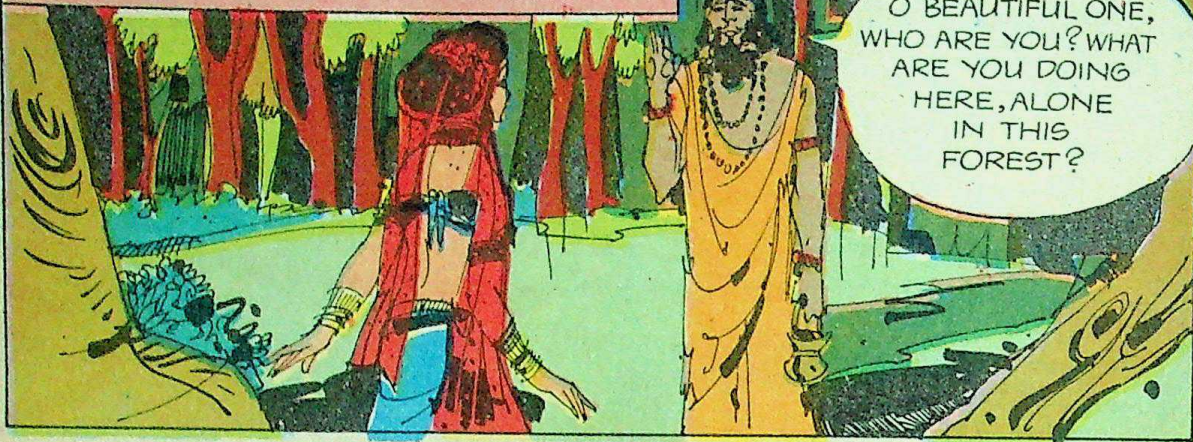


BUT IN HIS HEART OF HEARTS HE TREMBLED.



YET, HE DID NOT STOP BEING WICKED.

ONE DAY, RAVANA CAME, DISGUISED AS
A MONK, TO THE DANDAKA FOREST.



O BEAUTIFUL ONE,
WHO ARE YOU? WHAT
ARE YOU DOING
HERE, ALONE
IN THIS
FOREST?

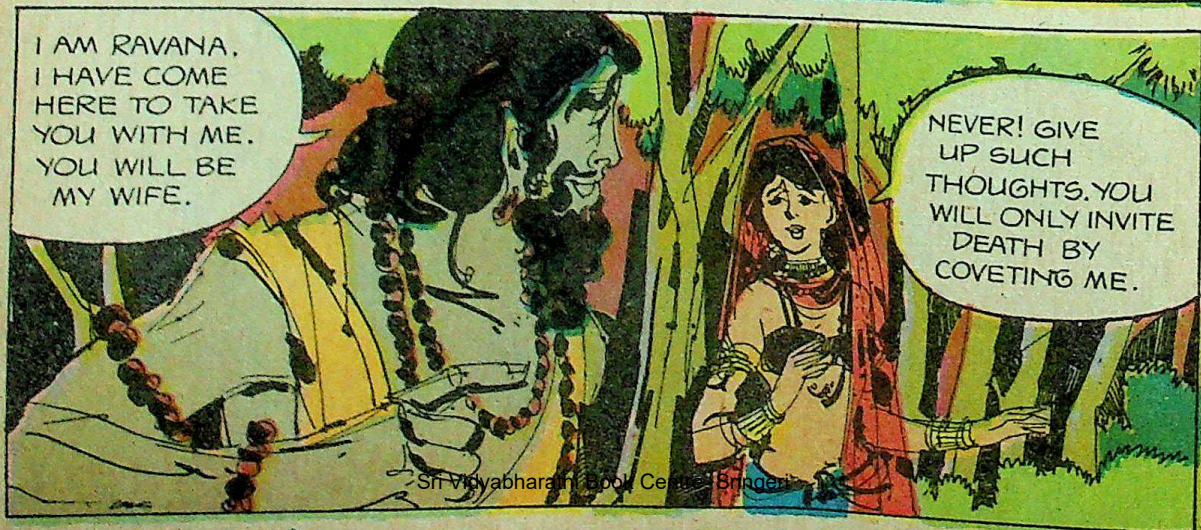
I AM SITA, WIFE OF RAMA,
THE PRINCE OF AYODHYA.
HE HAS GONE HUNTING...



...MY HUSBAND HAD TO COME
TO LIVE IN THE FOREST TO
FULFIL A PROMISE MADE
BY HIS FATHER, WHO
ARE YOU?



I AM RAVANA.
I HAVE COME
HERE TO TAKE
YOU WITH ME.
YOU WILL BE
MY WIFE.



NEVER! GIVE
UP SUCH
THOUGHTS. YOU
WILL ONLY INVITE
DEATH BY
COVETING ME.

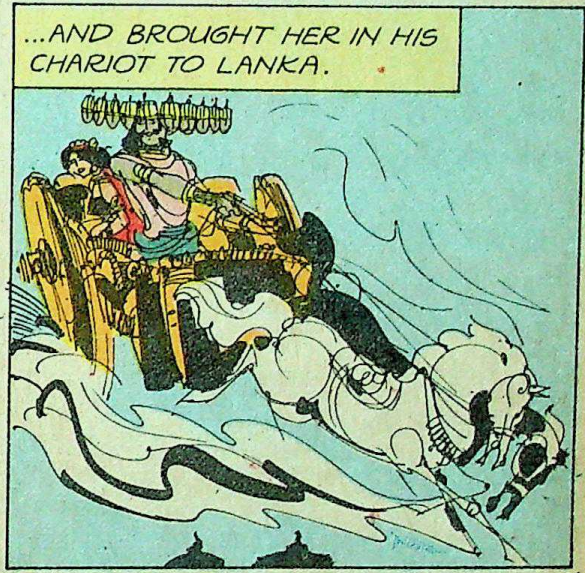
UNDAUNTED RAVANA ASSUMED A HUGE FORM.



HE LIFTED HER...



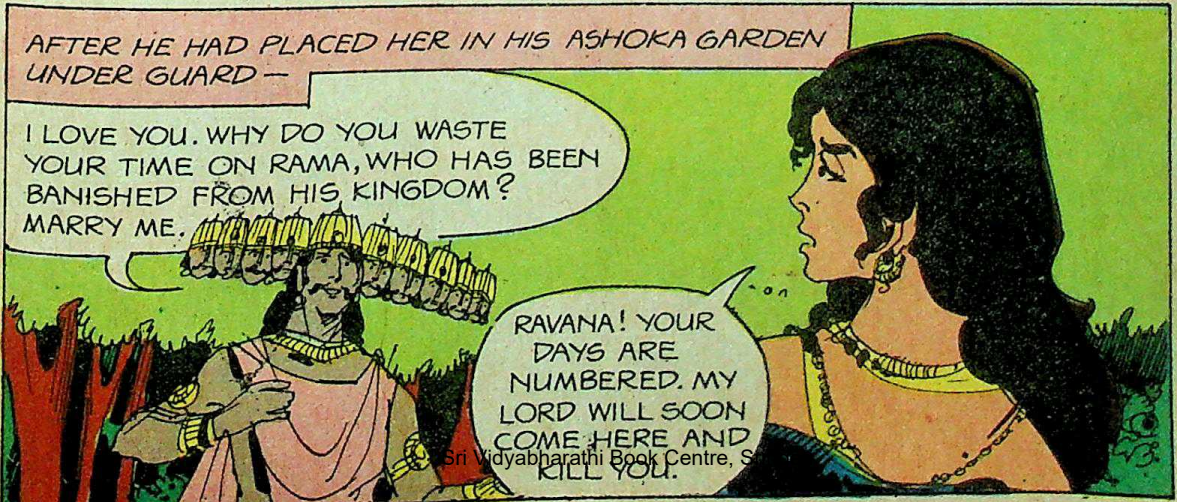
...AND BROUGHT HER IN HIS CHARIOT TO LANKA.



AFTER HE HAD PLACED HER IN HIS ASHOKA GARDEN UNDER GUARD —

I LOVE YOU. WHY DO YOU WASTE YOUR TIME ON RAMA, WHO HAS BEEN BANISHED FROM HIS KINGDOM? MARRY ME.

RAVANA! YOUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED. MY LORD WILL SOON COME HERE AND KILL YOU.



ENRAGED, RAVANA ADVANCED TOWARDS HER...

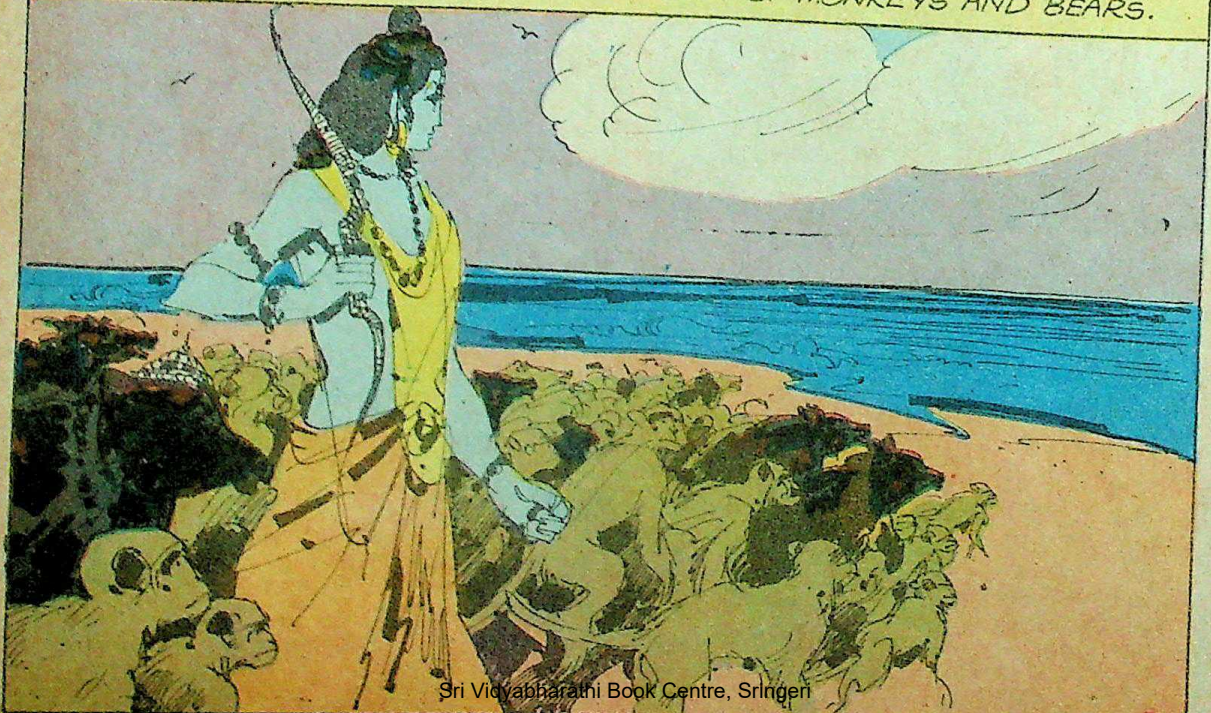
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...BUT FEAR KEPT HIM AWAY.

NO. NALKOOBER'S CURSE MAY COME TRUE. I MUST NOT MARRY A WOMAN AGAINST HER WILL.



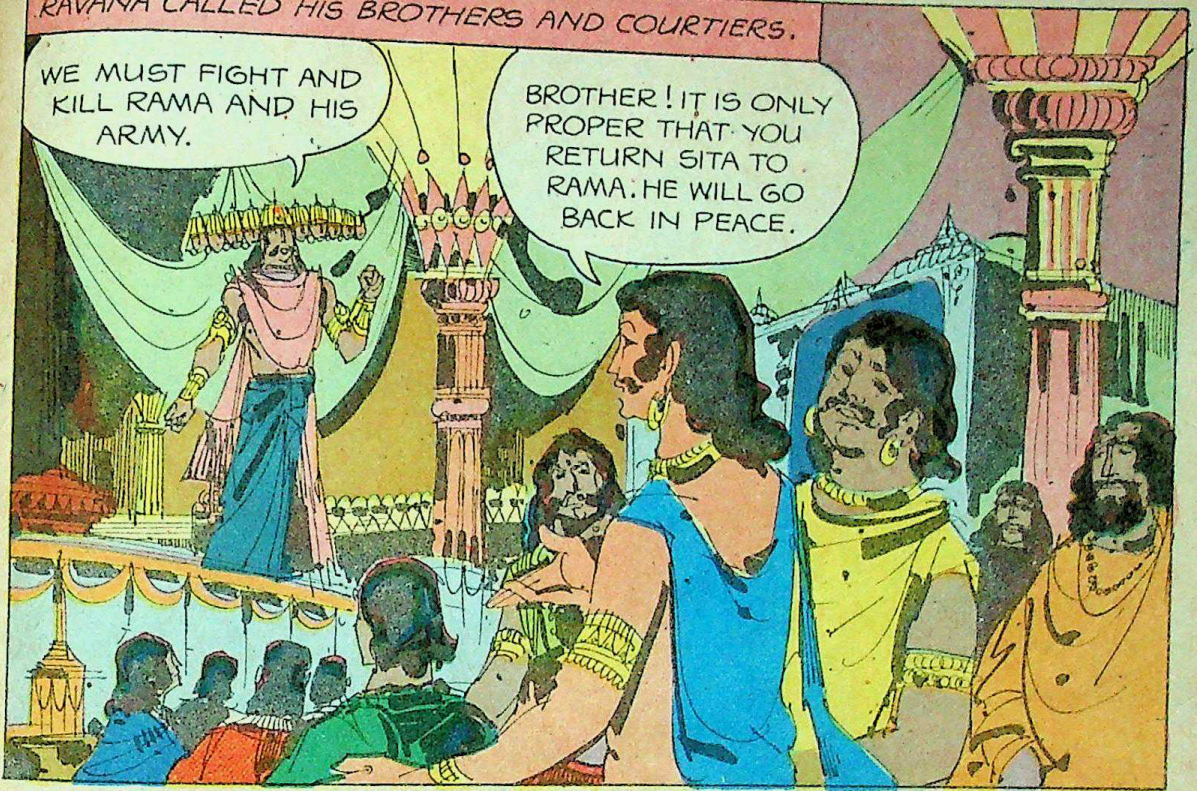
MEANWHILE, RAMA WAS ON HIS WAY TO LANKA. HE HAD REACHED THE SHORE OF THE OCEAN WITH A HUGE ARMY OF MONKEYS AND BEARS.



RAVANA CALLED HIS BROTHERS AND COURTIERS.

WE MUST FIGHT AND
KILL RAMA AND HIS
ARMY.

BROTHER ! IT IS ONLY
PROPER THAT YOU
RETURN SITA TO
RAMA. HE WILL GO
BACK IN PEACE.

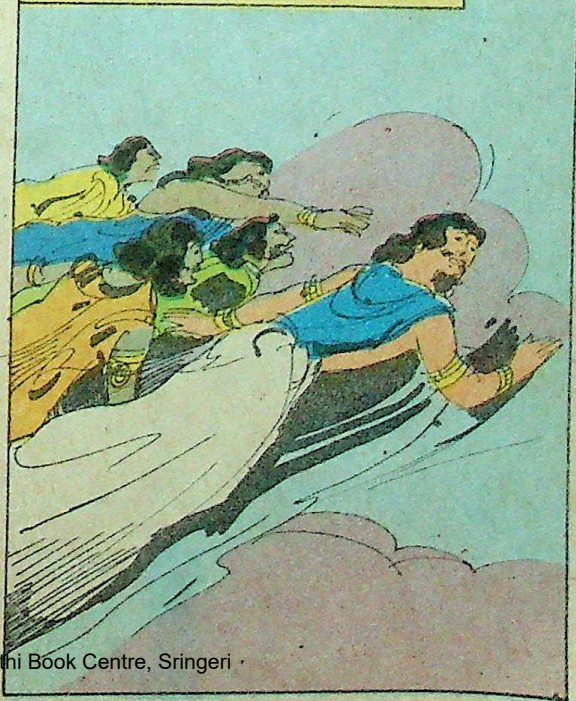


RAVANA WAS ANGRY WITH
VIBHEESHANA.

YOU CANNOT BEAR TO SEE MY
MIGHT. YOU ARE A DISGRACE TO
THE FAMILY. IF YOU WERE NOT
MY BROTHER I WOULD HAVE
KILLED YOU.

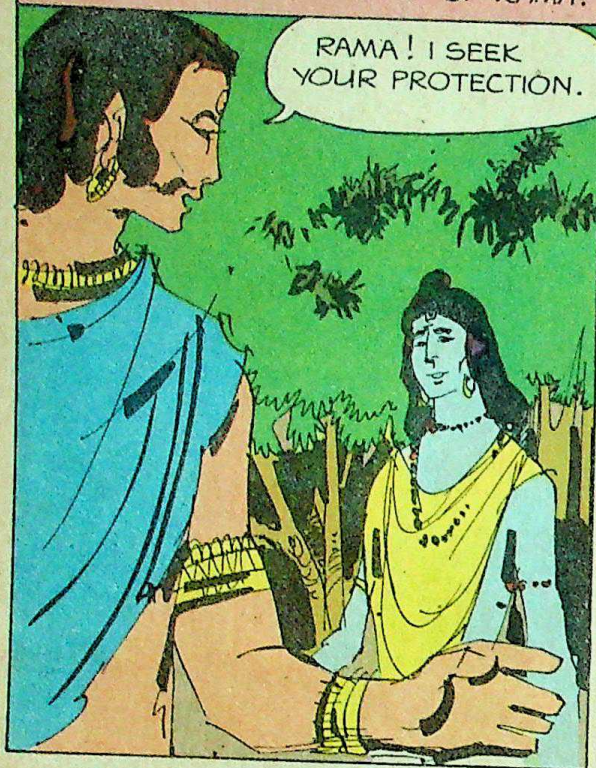


VIBHEESHANA, WITH FOUR
OTHER RAKSHASAS FLEW
INTO THE SKY...



...AND CAME TO THE COURT OF RAMA.

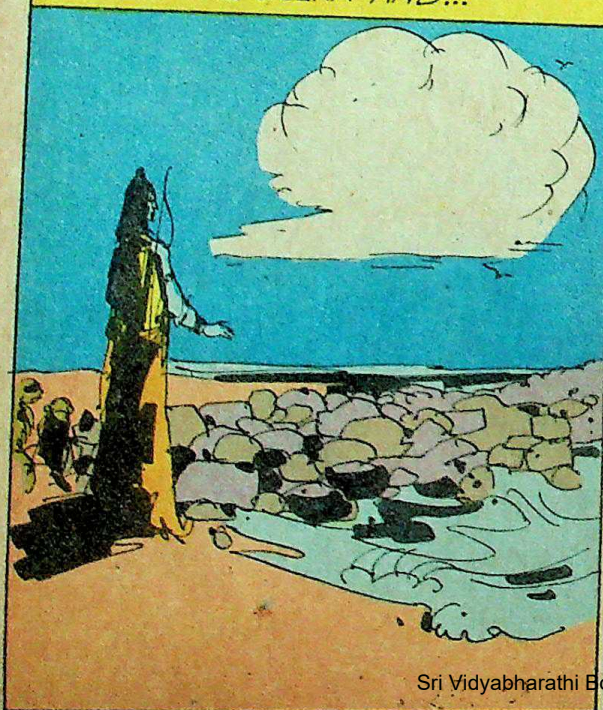
RAMA! I SEEK
YOUR PROTECTION.



YOU WILL BE SAFE
HERE. I COUNT ON
YOUR HELP.



SOON A BRIDGE WAS CONSTRUCTED
ACROSS THE OCEAN AND...

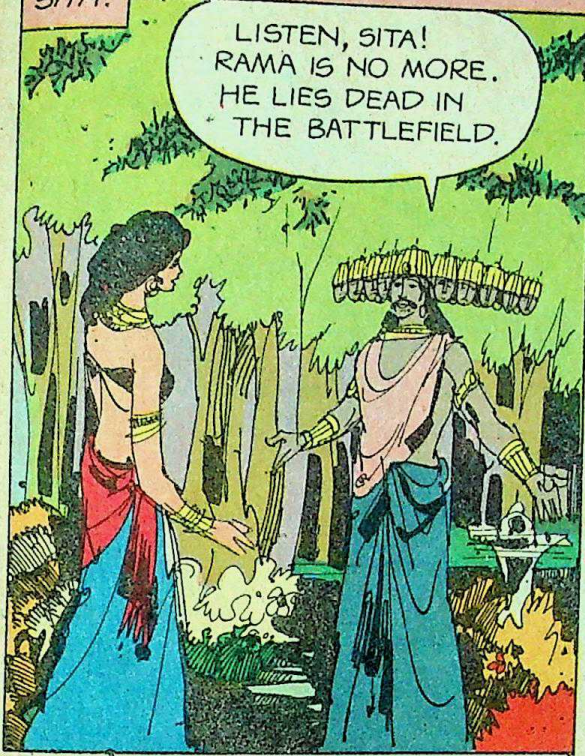


...RAMA REACHED LANKA.

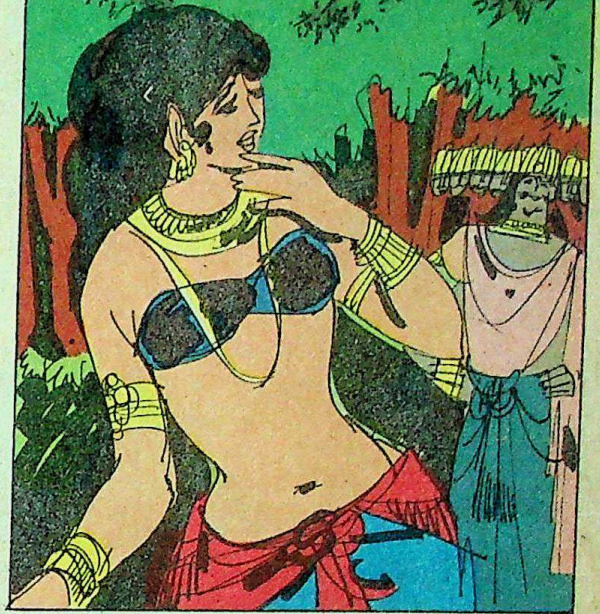


RAVANA BECAME IMPATIENT WITH SITA.

LISTEN, SITA!
RAMA IS NO MORE.
HE LIES DEAD IN
THE BATTLEFIELD.



I DON'T BELIEVE
YOU.



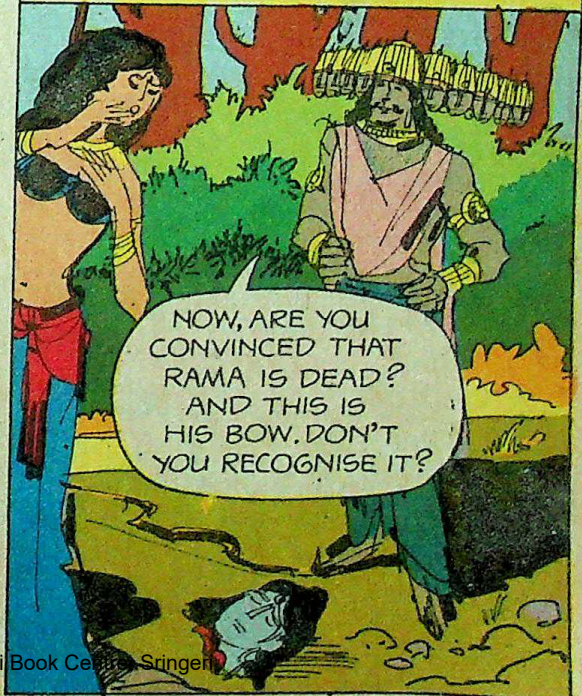
RAVANA TURNED TO ONE OF HIS
WARRIORS.

GO AND FETCH
THE HEAD
OF RAMA.



WITHIN MINUTES, THE HEAD OF
RAMA LAY IN FRONT OF SITA.

NOW, ARE YOU
CONVINCED THAT
RAMA IS DEAD?
AND THIS IS
HIS BOW. DON'T
YOU RECOGNISE IT?



WHEN HE FELL —

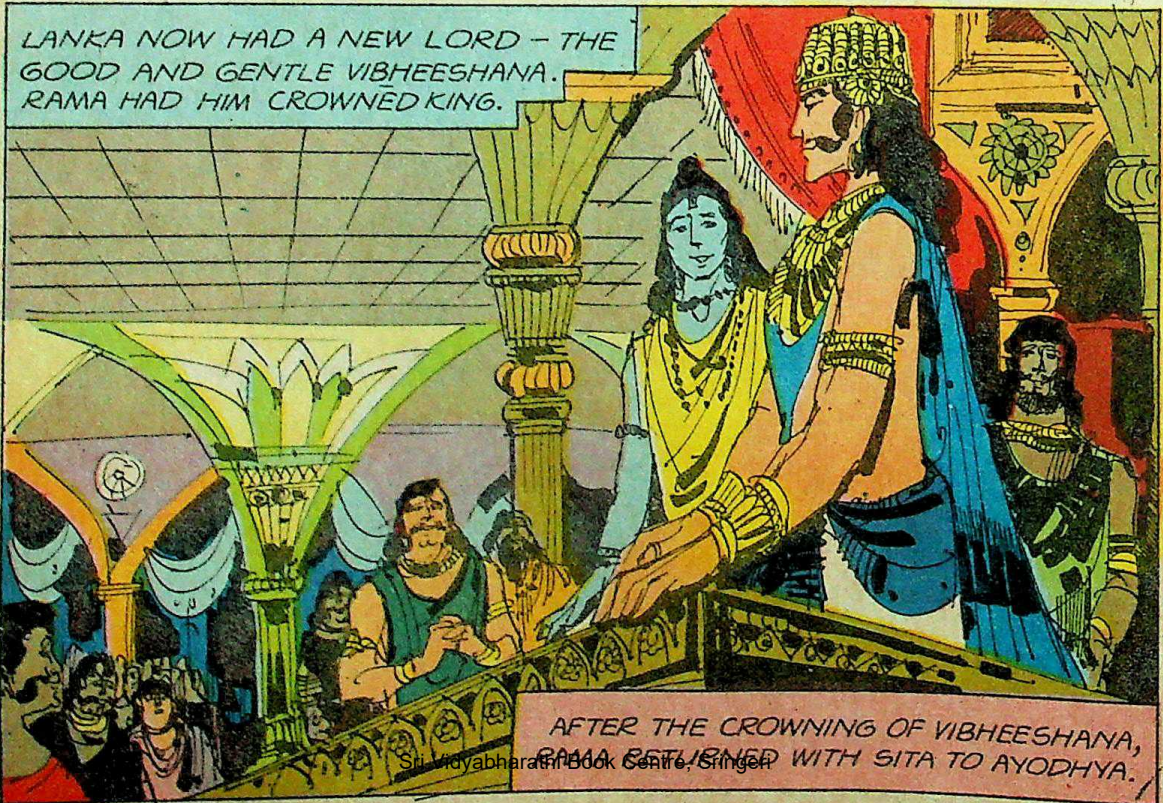
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MY BROTHER! HOW
I WISH YOU HAD
HEEDED MY WORDS!
YOUR PRIDE BROUGHT
ABOUT THIS FALL.

DON'T GRIEVE,
VIBHEESHANA!
HE HAS DIED
LIKE A BRAVE
WARRIOR.



LANKA NOW HAD A NEW LORD — THE
GOOD AND GENTLE VIBHEESHANA.
RAMA HAD HIM CROWNED KING.



AFTER THE CROWNING OF VIBHEESHANA,
RAMA RETURNED WITH SITA TO AYODHYA.



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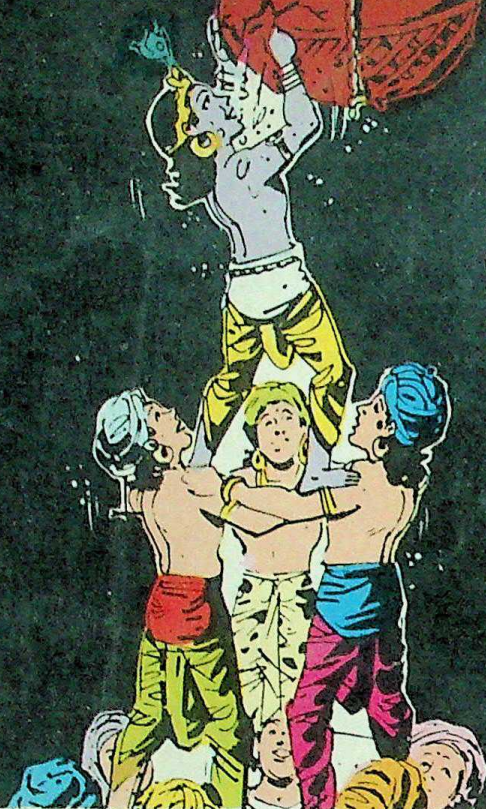
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